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**Where might the GCSEs in vocational subjects lead?**
As with all GCSEs, the GCSEs in vocational subjects can be used to progress to study another qualification in school or college, such as a VCE (vocational A Level), an AS level or an ‘A’ level in a closely related subject; a vocational diploma or an NVQ in a vocationally specific area. From there, students might go on to university. Students might start work and take an Advanced Modern Apprenticeship leading to a skilled career or management training, and later to a foundation degree or other higher education course. Or they might take further training that links education to employment such as a Foundation Modern Apprenticeship.

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Copies of this publication can be obtained from:

- DfES publications
  - Tel: 0845 60 333 60
  - Fax: 0845 60 333 60
  - Textphone: 0845 60 555 60
  - Email: dfes@prolog.uk.com

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Introduction

The purpose of this leaflet is to give teachers and other education professionals a general overview of the General Certificates of Secondary Education (GCSEs) in vocational subjects, which were introduced in September 2002. This is the second revision to the first leaflet on the GCSEs in vocational subjects. Other leaflets address questions raised by pupils, parents, guardians, careers advisers and employers, in relation to the GCSEs. During Key Stage 4 (school years 10 and 11) or sooner, many young people form a clear interest in the world of work and in turn, gain an interest in vocational learning. The GCSEs in vocational subjects have been designed to provide young people with the opportunity to explore these areas in a distinctive and innovative way - by developing knowledge and understanding of a particular vocational area and by investigating and researching the world of work. Students can use creative and entrepreneurial skills within a vocational context. The GCSEs in vocational subjects provide the same standards and rigour as other GCSEs. As such they represent a positive choice for all students.

What subjects are available?

| Applied Art and Design | Provides opportunities to understand the professional world of art, craft and design through investigating the business and commercial aspects of the industry. |
| Engineering | Introduces the pupil to the process of engineering in the market place, with particular reference to design and the construction of design briefs in a range of business and industrial contexts. |
| Health and Social Care | Introduces pupils to a wide variety of work in evaluating a range of health and social care services and organisations, increasing their knowledge and developing awareness of influences on an individual's health and well-being and examining the influences on individual development. |
| Applied Science | Enables pupils to gain an understanding of the professional world of science and research through investigating the scientific equipment and investigating science based industries and how they work. |
| Applied Information and Communication Technology (ICT) | Enables pupils to understand the professional world of ICT. Pupils will be introduced to a wide variety of work in ICT and in applications, increasing their knowledge and developing an awareness of how ICT is used as a tool in vocational contexts in society more widely. |
| Leisure and Tourism | Provides opportunities to understand the leisure and tourism industries. Pupils will be introduced to a variety of different branches of the industries, increasing their knowledge and developing awareness of how leisure and tourism organisations operate. |
| Manufacturing | Provides for insights into the process of manufacturing in a range of business operations - with particular reference to design and the construction and implementation of design briefs. |
| Applied Business | Enables pupils to acquire the knowledge, understanding and relevant business skills which will equip students with what they need to start in work or go on to further education or training. |

Key Skills

- Guidance is given as to how key skills support and complement the awards.
- Examples of key skills that could be covered are Improving Own Learning Performance, Problem Solving and Working with Others. In addition there will be detailed signposting or mapping of key skill learning and assessment opportunities across the content.

Qualification Design

The grading system for GCSEs in vocational subjects is the same as that in place for other GCSEs. In most cases, the GCSEs in vocational subjects consist of three equally weighted units in each subject. National criteria determine the qualification’s content for each subject and apply across all awarding bodies. Internal and external assessment arrangements differ between awarding bodies and they are responsible for their own guidance on delivery and assessment (see the last page). Key features of the GCSEs in vocational subjects are as follows:

- Equivalent to two other GCSEs;
- Same grading as GCSEs A*A* to G with U = Unclassified;
- Cover both level 1 (foundation) and level 2 (intermediate) of the National Qualifications Framework as all GCSEs;
- Assessment usually consists of one third external assessment (one unit) and two thirds internal assessment (two units);
- Overall qualification grade results from the aggregation of unit results.

Teaching/contact hours are not prescribed but as the qualifications are equivalent to two GCSEs, schools and colleges should want to double the amount of time they allow for existing GCSEs.

Schools and colleges might also want to plan the curriculum to enable longer periods of time to be set aside for work placements or other practical activities such as visits.

How are the GCSEs in vocational subjects taught?

Classroom teaching is similar to other subjects - to increase knowledge and understanding and develop skills. However GCSEs in vocational subjects encourage learning within a vocational context throughout the course. Such learning might include:

- Visits to placements in industry and/or business to gain some practical experience of the skills used;
- Project work undertaken jointly with groups of pupils to develop self confidence and to increase awareness of the values and attitudes relevant to work;
- Using the internet to find out about an industry or a particular organisation;
- Use of case studies and business-based materials;
- A range of subject areas, based upon the work of industry or a particular organisation;
The GCSEs in vocational subjects aim to:

- Introduce learners to a broad sector of industry and business;
- Encourage understanding of the sector, key concepts and theories prevalent in it;
- Develop capability in some skills used within it.

There are currently eight titles covering a range of subject areas, based upon the seven former Part One GNVQ subjects (plus Applied Science). The awarding bodies are developing two additional GCSEs in Construction and the Built Environment, and Performing Arts. Details of these new subjects will be publicised in due course.

Purpose

The GCSEs in vocational subjects are as follows:

- Applied Information and Communication Technology (ICT)
- Applied Art and Design
- Applied Business
- Engineering
- Health and Social Care
- Manufacturing
- Leisure and Tourism
- Applied Science

Key Skills

Guidance is given as to how key skills support and complement the awards. Examples of key skills that could be covered include Improving Own Learning Performance, Communication and Teamwork, Problem Solving and Working with Others. In addition to these there will be detailed signposting or mapping of key skill learning and assessment opportunities across the content.

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GCSEs in vocational subjects

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Applied Business

Enables pupils to acquire the knowledge, understanding and relevant business skills which will equip students with what they need to start in work or go on to further education or training.

Engineering

Introduces the pupil to the process of engineering in the market place, with particular reference to design and the construction of design briefs in a range of business and industrial contexts.

Health and Social Care

Introduces pupils to a wide variety of work in evaluating a range of health and social care services and organisations, increasing their knowledge and developing awareness of influences on an individual’s health and well-being and examining the influences on individual development.

Applied Information and Communication Technology (ICT)

Enables pupils to understand the professional world of ICT. Pupils will be introduced to a wide variety of work in ICT and in applications, increasing their knowledge and developing an awareness of how ICT is used as a tool in vocational contexts in society more widely.

Leisure and Tourism

Provides opportunities to understand the leisure and tourism industries. Pupils will be introduced to a variety of different branches of the industries, increasing their knowledge and developing awareness of how leisure and tourism organisations operate.

Manufacturing

Provides for insights into the process of manufacturing in a range of business operations - with particular reference to design and the construction and implementation of design briefs.

Applied Science

Enables pupils to gain an understanding of the professional world of scientific activity and research and there will be ample opportunity for practical laboratory work, experimenting with a range of scientific equipment and investigating science based industries and how they work.

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GCSEs in vocational subjects

A general guide and overview of the qualifications

Role play and workplace simulations;
Finding out about what people do at work, and the qualifications and training they have;
Involving mini enterprise, perhaps with expert help from industry.

Assessment
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